

SENATE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR  
SENATE MEMORIAL 44

**49TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2009**

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO RENEWABLE ENERGY TRANSMISSION  
AUTHORITY TO IDENTIFY AND PRIORITIZE RENEWABLE ENERGY RESOURCE  
ZONES IN NEW MEXICO THAT HAVE POTENTIAL TO SUPPORT INDUSTRY  
DEVELOPMENT AMONG RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPERS FOR RENEWABLE  
RESOURCE GENERATION PROJECTS AND IDENTIFY AND PRIORITIZE THE  
BEST VIABLE OPTIONS FOR POTENTIAL TRANSMISSION CORRIDORS TO  
ACCOMMODATE RENEWABLE ENERGY EXPORT FROM NEW MEXICO IN  
ACCORDANCE WITH A DEFINED TIME LINE AND REQUESTING THE NEW  
MEXICO RENEWABLE ENERGY TRANSMISSION AUTHORITY TO CONVENE A  
WORKING GROUP TO SUBMIT RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE LEGISLATURE FOR  
ESTABLISHING A PROCESS TO STREAMLINE PROCEDURES FOR  
ESTABLISHING RENEWABLE ENERGY TRANSMISSION PROJECTS IN NEW  
MEXICO.

WHEREAS, New Mexico is a state rich in renewable resource

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1 potential, including, but not limited to, solar, wind,  
2 geothermal, biomass and biofuels energy; and

3 WHEREAS, New Mexico is lacking transmission capacity to  
4 deliver renewable energy from where it is generated to load  
5 centers where it is needed; and

6 WHEREAS, New Mexico has taken the initiative to implement  
7 policies and incentives for renewable resource development,  
8 and, given New Mexico's geographical location, the state is  
9 poised to become a leader in the new energy economy; and

10 WHEREAS, renewable resource development will breathe new  
11 life into rural New Mexico through job creation, job training  
12 programs and financial investment; and

13 WHEREAS, transmission projects provide improved system  
14 reliability, improved infrastructure for economic development  
15 and enhanced diversity of power generation technologies that  
16 lead to lower or stabilized energy costs; and

17 WHEREAS, transmission development could open a market for  
18 New Mexico to export energy to markets outside of the state;  
19 and

20 WHEREAS, the use of renewable energy resources is of vital  
21 importance to New Mexico's future; and

22 WHEREAS, the New Mexico renewable energy transmission  
23 authority was created by the passage into law of House Bill 188  
24 in 2007 that requires the authority to plan, finance, build and  
25 operate new electricity transmission lines that carry power at

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1 least thirty percent of which originates from renewable  
 2 sources; and

3 WHEREAS, through resolution, the authority has agreed to  
 4 adhere to the Open Meetings Act; and

5 WHEREAS, the identification of renewable energy resource  
 6 zones and potential corridors to accommodate those identified  
 7 zones affects the public and the potential for opportunities in  
 8 New Mexico; and

9 WHEREAS, there exist substantial barriers to developing,  
 10 siting, permitting, procuring and establishing electric  
 11 transmission infrastructure in New Mexico due to the multiple  
 12 state and federal requirements that apply; and

13 WHEREAS, the western governors' association has undertaken  
 14 the western renewable energy zone process to identify and  
 15 expedite cost-effective, environmentally sensitive electric  
 16 transmission development to areas with high-grade, renewable  
 17 energy resources; and

18 WHEREAS, encouraging greater and more timely renewable  
 19 energy development means that New Mexico's governmental bodies  
 20 and instrumentalities, Public Service company of New Mexico,  
 21 Tri-State Generation and Transmission association,  
 22 incorporated, El Paso Electric company, the United States  
 23 bureau of land management, the United States forest service and  
 24 New Mexico nongovernmental environmental organizations need to  
 25 establish a coordinated, cohesive and unified approach to

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1 improve and streamline the manner in which renewable-energy  
2 electric transmission infrastructure is developed, sited,  
3 permitted, procured and established; and

4 WHEREAS, New Mexico needs to establish a framework for  
5 early cooperation and participation among and between state and  
6 federal entities and processes to enhance coordination of all  
7 applicable land use authorizations, related environmental,  
8 cultural and historic preservation reviews and all other  
9 approvals that may be required under federal law in order to  
10 site electric transmission facilities; and

11 WHEREAS, for electric transmission infrastructure that  
12 crosses state boundaries, there will need to be coordination  
13 with bodies and agencies of the federal government;

14 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE  
15 OF NEW MEXICO that the board of the New Mexico renewable energy  
16 transmission authority be requested to:

17 A. develop a map and any necessary supporting  
18 documents identifying existing generation and transmission  
19 lines and renewable energy resource zones within New Mexico  
20 that have the potential to support competition among renewable  
21 energy developers for development of projects in the identified  
22 renewable energy resource zones;

23 B. coordinate with applicable state and federal  
24 agencies to prioritize regions with low or minimal land  
25 development conflicts;

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1 C. using the map and additional available  
2 information, identify and prioritize the best viable options  
3 for potential transmission corridors to accommodate renewable  
4 energy exports from New Mexico;

5 D. present the map and documents developed pursuant  
6 to this memorial to the governor and the interim legislative  
7 New Mexico finance authority oversight committee at its first  
8 meeting of the interim;

9 E. solicit public comments on the draft maps and  
10 documents presented to the committee;

11 F. provide for a forty-five-day public comment  
12 period;

13 G. solicit electric utilities, affiliated  
14 transmission companies and independent transmission companies  
15 to identify the existing or new transmission infrastructure  
16 necessary to deliver energy production potential for each of  
17 the regions identified and submit this information to the  
18 authority for review; and

19 H. report back to the New Mexico finance authority  
20 oversight committee no later than October 31, 2009 with a  
21 revised map and supporting documents designating zones and  
22 prioritized corridors based on consideration of public comments  
23 and proposed transmission infrastructure; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Mexico renewable  
25 energy transmission authority be requested to convene a working

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1 group, composed of the public regulation commission, the  
2 commissioner of public lands, the economic development  
3 department, Public Service company of New Mexico, Tri-State  
4 Generation and Transmission association, incorporated, El Paso  
5 Electric company, the United States bureau of land management,  
6 the United States forest service and New Mexico nongovernmental  
7 environmental organizations, and submit a joint report to the  
8 legislature by October 1, 2009 that:

9           A. identifies administrative, jurisdictional and  
10 other barriers that may impede effective and expeditious  
11 opportunities for developing electric transmission  
12 infrastructure to support renewable energy production in New  
13 Mexico;

14           B. describes opportunities to integrate utility  
15 infrastructure planning into federal, state and local planning  
16 initiatives, with the goal of streamlining the process by which  
17 projects can be permitted and developed while improving utility  
18 and public communication as part of the planning process;

19           C. proposes modification of procedures for the  
20 federal energy regulatory commission prefiling process for an  
21 electric transmission project to begin and proceed concurrently  
22 with other federal and state permitting processes; and

23           D. recommends actions, agreements, regulatory  
24 reform and other steps that could be taken by the state and the  
25 federal government to establish a coordinated, cohesive and

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1 unified approach to improve and streamline the manner in which  
 2 renewable energy transmission infrastructure is developed,  
 3 sited, permitted, procured and established within New Mexico to  
 4 promote effective and expeditious electric transmission  
 5 infrastructure; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
 7 transmitted to the renewable energy transmission authority, the  
 8 public regulation commission, the commissioner of public lands,  
 9 the economic development department, Public Service company of  
 10 New Mexico, Tri-State Generation and Transmission association,  
 11 incorporated, El Paso Electric company, the United States  
 12 bureau of land management and the United States forest service.

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